

The Musical World.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

No. I.

SIR,—I have been reading some criticisms on the comparative state of music in England and on the continent, which have afforded me much amusement. The writer (who styles himself without intending it) a "distinguished musician," is very severe upon the London orchestras, but unfortunately does not adhere to the truth. In his allusion to a certain concert given by the Philharmonic Society, he proves one of two things—either that he was not present at the performance he stigmatizes, or that, being present, he does not know Mozart from Beethoven, which argues little in favor of his musicianship. "The symphony of Mozart" *did not* "come after that of Beethoven," but *before* it. The latter took up the whole of the second part of the concert. Moreover a "distinguished musician," who declares that he heard a symphony of Mozart, and "*can hardly recollect which*," must have advanced a very short way in his alphabet. Mozart has only left us seven grand symphonies, Beethoven only nine—and with these every one who pretends to the title of "musician," much more of "distinguished musician," is as intimately acquainted as a professor of mathematics with the books of Euclid. It is impossible that three consecutive bars of any one of them should be played (ever so "noisily") without being instantly recognized by anybody who knows them. He who knows them not has no right whatever to the name of musician, and his musical criticism merges into the impertinence of an ignoramus. I do not care which conclusion we come to. Either the "distinguished musician" is no musician, or he is a dishonest critic, since he abuses a performance at which he was not present. Assuming, however, that he *was* present, and that he is a "distinguished musician," and explaining the confusion of Mozart's symphony with Beethoven's, by extra liberal after-dinner potations, not unusual in "pleasure-train excursions," I cannot even then agree with him in his comparison between the French and English orchestras. I have had the best opportunities of judging both, and with the exception of the orchestra of the *Société des Concerts* (the French Philharmonic,) there is not one to compare with ours at Covent Garden. The bands of the *Grand Opera*, and the *Opera Comique*, once so perfect, have greatly deteriorated, and many of their best performers now belong to our London orchestras, where they are much better paid. Why they should be worse players in London than in Paris it would be difficult to decide.

I have always protested against the few rehearsals accorded to works of importance in this country, both operatic and instrumental; but there is, it would appear, no remedy for this. Our executants have not life-pensions from government on retirement, like the members of the *Grand Opera*; they are compelled to work hard, whilst they have health and strength, and their time is of the utmost importance; a day or two devoted to rehearsals is the loss of many private lessons to them. You may remember the first representation of the *Prophete*, at the Royal Italian Opera. The execution was, of course, not perfect, but it was wonderful what was done with so short a preparation. I maintain this opinion, in spite of the "distinguished musician." As sight-readers the English executants are the first in the world, and for spirit and energy superior to the French *Conservatoire* though not equal in the minute refinements of execution. Last winter I heard the Pastoral Symphony, and the Overture to *Oberon*, by the *Conservatoire* orchestra at Paris. The violins and wood instruments (flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons), played with extreme finish, but the horns were quite as inefficient as at our Philharmonic. The effect produced upon me was that of frigid correctness; there was none of that irresistible *entrain* which is the great characteristic of our London performers. The same opinion was expressed by an amateur of good taste, who was with me. Mendelssohn and Spohr—two very competent judges—both preferred the rough energy of the Philharmonic (which was not so good then as it is now) to the cold refinement of the *Conservatoire*. Berlioz—another very excellent authority—observed that he was never so much pleased with a performance of his works as at Drury Lane Theatre, when his symphony of *Harold* was executed, after one rehearsal. The tone produced by our stringed instruments is beyond comparison superior to that of the Paris and German orchestras. I have little doubt, however, that the "distinguished musician" is one of the French *feuilletonistes*, who, with few exceptions, are deplorably ignorant in musical matters. I read them all—from Jules Janin, Berlioz, and Fiorentino, to Scudo and Adam, and do not utter this condemnation at random, but with perfect conviction of its truth.

As a proof how far behind us are the French in the highest school of music, not one of the oratorios of Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, or Spohr is known in Paris. On one occasion, I heard an attempt to execute a single chorus from *St. Paul*, at the *Conservatoire*, and on another, the whole oratorio at a concert; in both instances the effect was very unsatisfactory, so

much so, that I was really astonished. At the Conservatoire not one fifth of the great instrumental compositions of Mendelssohn are known; and except a fragment of the *Power of Sound*, and the overture to *Jessonda*, not a single orchestral work of Spohr, one of the greatest and most prolific of instrumental composers, has ever been tried. In London, as you well know, all these oratorios and orchestral compositions are familiar to concert-goers. I can assure you I speak without prejudice on the subject. I have been to the great German festivals; I was at the grand fete at Bonn, when Beethoven's statue was inaugurated; I was at the Rhenish triennial festival at Dusseldorf, where Mendelssohn produced his *Paulus* for the first time; I have heard all the theatre and concert orchestras in Paris; I have conversed with amateurs and connoisseurs, German and French; I have met nearly all the foreign composers of eminence, and have had opportunities of conversing with them on subjects relating to their art, and after much experience and much observation, I am intimately persuaded that, although government takes no interest in music here, although we have no National Opera, although almost all our composers—and some of them have very great merit—are neglected by managers and those who might aid them, in spite of all this I am intimately persuaded that music is nowhere so well cultivated, so well understood, and so properly appreciated as here, and that London, and not Paris, is the capital of the musical world! The crowds that go to Exeter Hall, to listen to music that yields *nothing* to popular caprice, say more for real appreciation and real love of the art than all the performances at the Grand Opera. In England Mendelssohn is the acknowledged representative of modern music, in France Rossini. There is as much real distinction between these two men as between Shakspeare and Scribe, and there is, in my opinion, a proportionate difference between the English popular taste and that of the French. In music as in other things, the English like the solid and deeper stuff, the French the brilliant and showy; the parallel will hold wherever the two nations may be compared with each other. I am English and am proud to feel with the English in these matters.

The extract from the ———* appears to me an unprincipled attack upon the English press, disgraceful to the respectable columns in which it appears. There is nothing easier than to write a string of paradoxes, or sophistries (either term is too mild for the unsupported assumptions of the writer) with a full stop after each; it looks showy, and the writer may pass for a smart pen. But when every paragraph is a gross exaggeration, if not an absolute falsehood, I pity the feelings of him, who, for the sake of a pungent sentence, can allow his pen thus boldly to violate the truth. That there is much to mend in the musical press

* An English paper. Our Correspondent will pardon us for not giving the name.

of London, I do not deny; that the style of many is at times too high flown for the theme, I admit; but that—with the exceptions always found, to no matter what rule—the gentlemen who write on musical and dramatic subjects for the London papers are persons of intelligence, ability, and integrity, I should be sorry to deny. They deliver their opinions honestly and frankly, according to the importance of the subject on which they write.

The wholesale condemnation of musicians, no matter on what specious grounds, is in bad taste, and unsustained by argument and truth. There are "quacks and charlatans" in all trades and callings, and music shares the common lot. That certain writers hold music in contempt is evident, but how much music suffers by their disregard is not so evident. I am inclined to think it will benefit more by their opposition than by their support. That such critics are unable, or unwilling, to appreciate the qualities required to produce a musical work of merit and importance, is their own misfortune. There is nothing to boast of in being ignorant of anything, even of music. Providence has allotted us the time and the means to learn but few things well; and he who knows one thoroughly, more especially when that one thing is a beautiful art, the principles of which are based upon eternal truth, ought at least to be respected. When the days and nights of unremitting labour required to obtain a mastery over any single instrument are taken into consideration, even a mere executant is not to be despised by the profoundest of philosophers.

The system of overplaying artists, which some writers aver "cannot endure long," has at any rate prevailed, more or less, since the time of Addison,—a pretty good spell. To alter it, the world must be differently constituted. To reward merit of every kind, in just proportion, demands a total remodification of human nature. So far as history reaches into the very darkness of earliest times, the highest order of merit has been very ill-paid, in comparison with the superficial brilliancy that appeals directly to the half-educated or uneducated taste of the masses. In music, as in other arts, mediocrity thrives while sterling merit pines. Beethoven and Mozart receive one shilling where Verdi and Donizetti got a thousand pounds. In revenge Posterity takes the former by the hand and leaves the latter to oblivion. It is, perhaps, a poor consolation, but yet hardly so to a sincere nature, which has one great object in view, and pursues it with unabating toil and perseverance, through every species of disappointment and humiliation—withstanding the sneers of the sceptic, braving with meekness the ridicule of the scorner, strong in its own purpose, determined to arrive at the goal. To such we owe all of excellence in art, and science, and literature, and philosophy; but, with a few happy exceptions, how many have been appreciated and rewarded in their time? The average would present a sorry account indeed. But thus it is with poor human nature; and not until one of these

our and sceptical critics, with a new "*Dunciad*," or some one of a better and a wiser class, shall have educated all mankind into perfection, will it be otherwise.

AN ENGLISH MUSICIAN.

SOPHIE CRUVELLI IN NABUCCO.

(Extract from a Private Letter.)

"Apropos de succès, je vous dirai que la Cruvelli en a eu un étourdissant dans *Nabucco*. Jamais je n'ai rien vu d'aussi beau qu'elle dans ce rôle. C'est vraiment l'idéal du beau et du grandiose. Il n'y a pas une phrase, une note, qui ne soit un chef d'œuvre. Je pense à vous, qui l'admirez tant, quand je l'entends, et je voudrais vous voir à ma place. Son triomphe a été complet, car la critique a pâli et s'est retirée devant ce succès colossale, honteuse et sans voix."

"Apropos of success, I must tell you that la Cruvelli has had an overwhelming one in *Nabucco*. I have never seen any thing so fine as she is in this part (Abigail). It is truly the ideal of the beautiful and the sublime. Not a phrase or a note but is a *chef d'œuvre*. I think of you, who admire her so, when I hear her, and I wish to see you in my place. Her triumph was complete, for criticism paled and retreated before so colossal a success, ashamed and dumb."

Paris, Jan. 26.

M. M.

MR. AGUILAR'S SECOND SOIREE OF PIANOFORTE MUSIC FROM THE WORKS OF BEETHOVEN.

From the very numerous and fashionable audience which thronged the Beethoven Rooms on Tuesday last, it appears that the programme of the second *soirée* proved even more attractive than that of the first.

The instrumental pieces performed were the celebrated sonata, *Pathétique*, the sonata in G, No. 1, Op. 29, and two of the "*Bagatelles*," for piano solo, and the sonata in A, No. 2, Op. 12, for piano and violin. Mr. Aguilar was equally at home in the passionate and gloomy sonata, *Pathétique*, and the brilliant and sparkling one in G, besides fully entering into the simple, and sometimes quaint, spirit of the duet for piano and violin, in which Herr Jansa fully sustained his well-earned reputation as a violinist of the pure and classical school. Perhaps the gem of the evening was the andante from the violin sonata, a movement of passionate yet touching melancholy in which the tones produced by both executants might almost be compared to the low wailing of some broken heart. The two bagatelles, a little andante in A, and a merry scherzo in C, terminated this interesting programme, which was agreeably relieved by two vocal pieces, one the romanza for Mathilde, from *Guillaume Tell*, the other Churesmann's pretty "*Huttelein*," (encored) both charmingly sung by Miss Messent.

The next *soirée* takes place on February 10th.

LIVERPOOL CLASSICAL CONCERTS.—The third of these concerts at the Philharmonic Hall, takes place on the 4th of February. Mr. Brinley Richards is announced as pianist: he will play Stern-dale Bennet's chamber-trio, and Beethoven's sonata in F major, for piano and violin. Mr. Charles Hallé will appear at the fourth concert.

MUSIC AT MANCHESTER.

(From our own Correspondent.)

MR. CHARLES HALLÉ'S SEVENTH CLASSICAL CHAMBER CONCERT.

PROGRAMME.—FIRST PART.

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| Grand Trio—Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello. (In B Flat, Op. 97) | Beethoven. |
| Grand Sonata—Pianoforte, and Violoncello. (In A, Op. 69) | Beethoven. |

PART SECOND.

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| Grand Trio—Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello. (In C Minor, Op. 66) | Mendelssohn. |
| Solo—Violoncello | F. Schubert. |
| Solo—Violin | Molique & S. Bach. |
| Solo—Pianoforte. (In A Flat and F. Minor) (In E Flat, Op. 29) | Chopin. St. Heller. |

Mr. Hallé has frequently afforded a great treat to his friends and subscribers, by procuring, now and then, an instrumental celebrity to give *éclat* to his chamber concerts—as well as to give perfection to the performances. Ernst, Piatti, and Molique, have all appeared there before at different times, but never before had Hallé two such celebrities to play with him as Molique and Piatti at the same concert. Any of your readers who may have heard Charles Hallé in chamber music—or the other two—at any time—may form some idea of the marvellous *ensemble*, when three such players got together; but to convey the faintest idea of its actual perfection to those who have never heard these eminent men is absolutely impossible. Hallé had a programme suited to the talent he had with such liberality engaged—two trios for the three together, one by each of the greatest writers, Beethoven and Mendelssohn, a duo sonata of Beethoven, for Piatti and himself, a solo for Piatti, one or two for Molique, and one or two for himself, made up altogether the greatest concert ever yet given by Hallé in Manchester. We had no vocalists—and none we wanted—there was ample feast enough in the instrumental sweet sound, and although the performance was protracted until the unusually late hour of ten minutes to eleven o'clock, no one was tired, and few, if any, of the regular subscribers left the room, until Hallé had played his last note.

Beethoven's Trio was one of his later works, that noble one in B flat (Op. 97), which Hallé before gave us at the Assembly Rooms more than once, and the last time with Piatti and Seymour some two years ago. To try and describe Beethoven's treatment of the elegant *motivi* which abound in this great trio—all differing as they do in character, in the allegro, the scherzo, the andante, which glides so gracefully into the finale—(an allegro again)—would be simply ridiculous. We shall try to do nothing of the sort; such a composition and such a performance may be heard with rapture and spoken of with delight, but they are above all criticism. Anything more beautiful than the playing together of these three great artists it is scarcely possible to conceive. The effect on the audience was to still them more than to excite noise or applause; half murmur, or suppressed exclamations of delight and wonder, were a higher compliment to them. The duo sonata was not one of the early ones either, the one in A (Op. 69) for violoncello and pianoforte, given before by Hallé and Piatti, in December, 1849. Here again the movements were pretty much in the same order, allegro, scherzo, and adagio cantabile, gliding into a finale allegro vivace. Here again were beautiful melodies scattered about with a prodigal hand, and here again were the master hands of Hallé and Piatti to give expression to a master work of the mighty Beethoven. It was listened to with intense delight

by the crowded auditors. Mendelssohn's grand trio in C minor (Op. 66), opened the second part, and was magnificently played; Hallé seemed to rise with the occasion, and quite surpassed himself. The purity of Molique's tone, and his peculiar style of blending it with the other instruments, Piatti's rich tones, and facile yet brilliant execution, made the whole a treat of the rarest and highest order; the singular, but beautiful and short scherzo was encored. Piatti next appeared as a soloist, and was honoured with a hearty round of applause; his choice was admirable, a simple but expressive melody of F. Schubert, just played through with all the power of tone and expression he could impart to it, which was a far greater treat to us than all the elaborate difficulties of which he could have shown us he was master, had he so chosen. Molique was well received also, when he came forward. He gave us two very graceful little affairs of his own—an andante in E flat, and an allegretto in A, showing his remarkable excellence, clearness, and purity to great advantage; then he gave a marvellous display of the pure fiddling school—a *chacconne* of Bach's, with a pianoforte accompaniment by Mendelssohn, a most extraordinary performance, which got great applause. Indeed there was such a buzz of admiration that Hallé came in and was quietly seated at the pianoforte to give his solo selection before any one almost was aware he was in the room. By degrees a clapping of hands began until everybody being apprized of the concert-giver's presence, thereby a most unanimous burst of applause was given to him as if in gratitude for bringing such masters as Molique and Piatti down to be heard with him in Manchester; and Hallé, unassuming and unpretending as he is, had to rise and bow his acknowledgments. He then wound up the concert with two of Chopin's studies, and Heller's study, called, "La Chasse,"—E flat, (Op. 29) played with all his wonted excellence. We feel that this is but a very scanty record of this truly great chamber concert, but we lack the talent to rise in power of description with the quality of the music and its greatness of execution. How will Hallé be enabled to go beyond, or even reach, the excellence of this seventh concert, at his eighth and last, which we see is fixed for the 5th February?

JULLIEN'S BENEFIT.—FREE TRADE HALL.

PROGRAMME.—PART I.

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| Overture, "Fidelio" | Beethoven. |
| Quadrille, "The St. Leger" | Jullien. |
| Solo—Oboe, M. Lavigne | Lavigne. |
| Symphony, The "Allegro Vivace," from Symphony in F. Minor | Mendelssohn. |
| Aria, "Care Compagne," from "La Sonnambula" | Bellini. |
| Miss Cicely Nott. | |
| Valse, "La Prima Donna" | Jullien. |
| Solo—Contra Basso, on Melodies from Bellini's Opera, "La Sonnambula." | |
| Signor Bottesini. | |
| Quadrille, "The Indian" | Jullien. |
| PART II. | |
| Opera (by desire), Grand Selection and Fantasia from Mozart's chef d'œuvre, "Don Giovanni." | |
| Duo for Two Violins, executed on One Violin | Paganini. |
| Signor Sivori. | |
| Polka, "The Crystal Fountain." | Jullien. |
| Alpen Song, "The Echo of Lucerne" | Roch-Albert. |
| Miss Cicely Nott. | |
| Duo—Violin and Contra-Basso, "La Fete des Bohemiennes" | Bottesini. |
| Signor Sivori and Signor Bottesini. | |
| Grand Galop, "The Review" | Jullien. |

Jullien had a *monstre* attendance again at the Free Trade

Hall on Saturday night last, in spite of the wind and the rain. Gentle and simple—reserved seat-occupants and promenaders—undeterred by the weather, were there in crowds. The concert partook much of the usual characteristics, a good portion of it being of a high classic order, and some of it very *Jullienic*.

Beethoven's overture to *Fidelio*, finely played, made a capital beginning. Next came Jullien's "St. Leger" quadrille—clever, *à la Jullien*. Lavigne's oboe solo was a wonderful performance; but we are not very partial to such display. Lavigne is a fine player, and has a beautiful tone; but we would rather it in its legitimate place in orchestral performances. Mendelssohn's "Allegro Vivace," from symphony in F minor, turned out to be Beethoven's *allegretto* in F,—splendidly played, of course. Miss Cicely Nott produced a marked sensation in "Come per me," from the *Sonnambula*. Her vocalization is admirable for so young a singer. Kœnig next sang out the lovely valse on his cornet, called "La prima donna," in which his instrument is *obligato*; and then Bottesini, the wonderful, made his appearance, and amazed, as well as delighted, the entire audience, by his marvellous execution on his double bass, in some variations on themes from the "Sonnambula," which, being encored, he changed to the everlasting "Carnival." The last production of Jullien's fertile brain—"The Indian Quadrille," finished the first part. It was the most intensely *Jullienic* of anything done that evening. The imitation of Cingalese birds, the gongs, &c. &c., must all be heard: they cannot be described. It is much of the same order of composition as the "Chinese" quadrille. The second part opened with something of (to us) a far more attractive character—the selection from "Don Giovanni." It was a treat to hear this arrangement again, and to listen to Mozart's lovely melodies, as sung by Lavigne, Beaumann, Prospere, and Kœnig, on their respective instruments. Beaumann's "Il mio tesoro," on the bassoon, was exquisitely given. Sivori next gave some of his marvels on the violin, in the shape of a *duo* for two violins, played on one, which, being encored, he changed to a *tremolo* more wonderful still. "The Crystal Fountain Polka" was next given, in which the water effects are cleverly managed *à la Jullien*; and the music is really very pretty. Miss Cicely Nott then gave her Alpen Song. There was a loud call for an *encore*, which was resisted so strenuously as to raise a spirit of opposition. Meantime, Sivori and Bottesini appeared, and had actually commenced their duet, when the clamours of the rival parties grew into a regular row. The great fiddler and the little fiddler hastily beat a retreat, and Jullien had to hand on his protégée. The two fiddlers then made their re-appearance, and gave one of the greatest performances of the night. One passage, by the two, in harmonics, was the most beautiful, and, at the same time, the most extraordinary we ever heard. The applause was immense, and deserved to be so.

The Grand Review Galop then played the audience out at very nearly eleven o'clock—so finishing Jullien's winter visit to Manchester for 1851-2.

DRURY LANE.—A performance is announced to take place at this theatre, under the patronage of Her Majesty, in aid of the fund for the relief of the sufferers by the destruction of the Amazon. We hear that the amiable and talented artiste, Mdle. Prita Favanti, has most generously volunteered her services on this occasion.

THE MECHANICAL DIFFICULTIES INCIDENT TO THE PERFORMANCE OF MUSIC.

THE subject we have selected as the theme of this article seems to be one of the vexed questions of the day. Here are three parties; the first does battle for mechanical difficulties, the second as manfully fights against them, while the third party mocks the other two, because, in his opinion, they are foolish enough to contend for a mere shadow. Misunderstanding, intemperate zeal, and mutual acrimony, are justly chargeable to all three. On the very face of the matter, it must surely be wrong to indulge in *bitterness* on the subject of *sweet sounds*. That each party is in error may be very easily shown. This controversy has lasted so long, and been carried to such lengths, that we can no longer pass it calmly by, or treat it with silent contempt. A dispute which agitates the whole of the musical public, and threatens the entire art with a sweeping revolution, has heavier *gravamen* than a mere whim, and demands our most deliberate and conscientious investigations. To attempt to sift out the useful and the true from this discussion may be looked upon as a task equally difficult with searching for the needle in the bottle of hay; but we know the value of the needle, and shall not shrink from the task.

Between the mere exercise of musical gymnastics and the soul-stirring enjoyments of melody and harmony, there is no medium—no golden mean. They are connected together, and yet they are as distinct from each other as is the swimmer from the flood. They are only joined as are the lake and the stars, when those bright orbs are mirrored on its bosom. We can neither afford to despise nor discard mechanical difficulties. No musical composition can exist without a sprinkling of them, either in a greater or less degree. A good piece of music without any difficulty in its execution is a musical impossibility. Seeing, then, that these difficulties are to be met with in every good composition, it becomes our duty to deal with them. Erased from the pages of our folios they cannot be. We must conquer them, *for to overcome them is to expunge them*. A certain amount of mechanical skill is essential. Without it there can be no enjoyment in the execution of music. Nay, young friend, do not make grimaces, first at us, and then at your exercise-book. In telling you that you never can have any pleasure in music until you are perfect master of a certain amount of hard, dry passages, we only speak the words of truth and soberness. Having thus proved that, however much of an outcry may be raised against difficult music, it must be grappled with, it will be asked to what extent is it to be studied? This question it is very difficult to answer. If a person were so disposed, the study might be carried on *ad infinitum*. We may, however, venture to say that this class of studies must be proportioned to the student's intentions. If his aim be high, he must make up his mind to the drudgery necessary to secure a high position.

And what must be done when these difficulties are overcome, or rather, what will remain to be done? Why, everything will remain to be done! By overcoming these irksome tasks, we are merely *prepared* to do something. When the Olympic racer had cast off his upper garments and girt on the waist-belt, he had not run, he had only stripped for the race: so here. The overcoming of these difficulties smooths the path of the true music. It takes the sting from the honey, and the thorn from the rose. We recommend the practice and mastery of mechanical difficulties as a *means* to an *end*—a step to something higher. As well might we hope to pluck the fruit of the vine growing far above us without using a ladder, as expect that we can lay hold on the poetry of music without first climbing to a level with it. If these counsels had been better attended to, we should have had far less of hesitating touch, of altering voice, and uncertainty of sound in our musical doings. Mechanical skill will give firmness, decision, and despatch in the execution of music, but it will do no more. And is not this enough for it to do? When persons of good taste and strong emotions attempt to execute a fine piece of music, they are delighted with the melody and disgusted with the dryer portions; carried away by their feelings, solely for the want of a little mechanism, they are spoiled as performers by the very thing which, when under control and discipline, would have rendered them perfect in expression—the emotions and feelings of the soul.

We are persuaded that we have said all that ought to be said in

favour of *variation* and *fantasia*. We must next point out their abuse. They are diverted from their legitimate use when, as means, they are put before the end. We have said that they are the ladder by which the grapes are gathered. What would our young ladies say if the footman were to bring the step-ladder from the greenhouse, and set it on the table instead of the *grapes*? Every time our fair ones disgust us with their musical clatter and rattle, they are playing the part of this maniac footman. Why should people bore us with the process, when we only want the results? Such persons, to be consistent with themselves, should put their copy-books, instead of letters and address, in the drawing-room. Music that has nothing but difficulties to recommend it is for private practice only.

In conclusion, we firmly believe that good—great good—will come of this controversy. The friends of melody have only to be firm, and their ultimate success is sure. The automaton of music shall be put down, and decision of touch and freedom of execution arise, Phoenix-like, from its ashes; while music—the mistress of the soul—no longer a supplanted and persecuted outcast, shall return home again to the world's heart, and be driven forth no more.—AURELIAN.

THE BIRTH OF MUSIC.

Respectfully dedicated to H. F. BROADWOOD, Esq.

At Heaven's command the bless'd creation smiled,

And all was joy, and harmony, and love;

Earth, air, and sea, the great Creator hail'd,

And new-born music woke in every grove.

The speckled thrush sang hymns to rosy morn,

And distant echo answered to the lay;

The skylark carolled o'er the waving corn,

To cheer the shepherd on his dewy way,

To tend his flock upon the mountain's brow,

Or flowery meads deep in some valley green,

Where all around would Nature's music flow:

Man's simple life was happy then, I ween.

Then first was heard the blackbird's mellow note,

And the grey linnet, sweet as sweet could be,

'Midst yellow-blossom'd furze poured from his throat

The dear enchanting lay of liberty.

The insect tribe, midst forests, fields, and plains,

Hummed hymns of gladness, and the vocal grove,

Like one vast choir, poured forth its thousand strains;

And hazel-copse concealed the cooing dove.

Then man in emulation framed the lay

To some fair virgin whom his heart adored,

And blithely, as he rose at dawn of day,

Love's gentle music from his soul he poured.

His mind progressive, soon the simple reed

He formed into a pipe, the hemlock wild

Became a flute (though now a noxious weed),

On which he played, and so his hours beguiled;

And the rude horn was heard o'er hill and dale,

With music wild commingling through the day,

Or prompt the dance at eve in flowery vale,

Till sounds like angels' whispers died away,

And beauty unadorned retired to rest

To some sequestered bower where blossoms white

Of jess'mine sweet smiled on the glowing west,

And shed rich fragrance through the stilly night.

The shawm, the sackbut, and the cymbals gay,

All in succession rose and lent their aid

To soothe the human breast and chase away

Desires impure, by dark temptation sway'd.

The lute, the timbrel, and the thrilling lyre,

Intruding discord to oblivion hurl'd,

And the first bard sang with poetic fire

Unto a listening and delighted world.

The harp responded to man's skilful hand,

And the loud-pealing Organ breathed on high,

An sweet piano spoke at his command,

Hailed by the shouts of universal joy.

JAMES HIPKINS.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE performances on Wednesday night consisted of two compositions by Mendelssohn, which the oftener they are heard the better they are understood and the more deeply they impress the hearer with their varied beauties. The *Lobgesang* or *Hymn of Praise*, and the music to Racine's *Athaliah*, may now be accepted among the stock pieces of the Sacred Harmonic Society; and it is no small credit to the committee of management that, in the face of adverse prejudice and timorous scepticism, they should have literally forced their subscribers and the public to listen to and ultimately appreciate these grand and original inspirations. Excepting the light and melodious oratorio of the *Creation*, which presents such irresistible attractions to the multitude, in its abundance of tune and entire absence of elaboration, no work, except *Elijah*, has been able to dispute the palm of supremacy, in general opinion, with the *Messiah*. The greatest effort of Handel himself, *Israel in Egypt*, has only very lately begun to occupy the place to which it is entitled. Since 1836, when it was first produced, *St. Paul* has been working its way gradually up; but it is evident that the enormous popularity of *Elijah*, augmented by the sudden and lamentable demise of the composer, in the prime of life, has been greatly instrumental in bringing this about, and that the favour so rapidly acquired of late by the *Lobgesang* and the music of *Athaliah* may be reasonably traced to the same cause. Apart, however, from adventitious circumstances, independently of the caprices of the multitude, and as a simple question of art, it is neither more nor less than just to place these productions among the masterpieces of the composer. The lovers of Mendelssohn—they who can enter into the depths of his purpose, who can feel the grandeur of his imagination, and appreciate his prodigious knowledge of harmony, counterpoint, and instrumentation; they in short who acknowledge him as one who completes the quartet of great poets of the orchestra, by the side of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, will require little argument to persuade them that the *Lobgesang* and the *Athaliah* are among those inspirations which most clearly and triumphantly declare his genius. The new and peculiar forms in which they are both moulded must necessarily, for a time, be barriers to their general appreciation; but the ice once broken, the novelty of plan once detected and made familiar, no further obstacle remains to their being as easily understood, as warmly and frankly admired, as the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the third symphony, or *Elijah* itself.

We have already on more than one occasion entered at great length into the design and execution of the *Lobgesang* and the music to *Athaliah*. It is, therefore, unnecessary to refer to the history of their origin, or to analyze in detail the various pieces of which they are composed. It is enough to speak of their execution on Wednesday under Mr. Costa's direction, which may be accomplished in very few words. So far as chorus and orchestra were concerned, we remember no performance at Exeter-hall more entirely satisfactory than the one at present under consideration. The progress recently made by the band was manifested to surprising advantage in the execution of the three instrumental movements of the *Lobgesang*, the overture to *Athaliah*, and the pompous and magnificent march of the Levites, which would have done credit to any body of instrumentalists now assembled in Europe. In the overture to *Athaliah* the introduction of six harps, although still falling short of the number intended by the composer, approach nearer to the desired effect than on any previous occasion; and subsequently, in some of the

most characteristic *morceaux d'ensemble* and choruses, the assistance of these special instruments was felt to be of essential consequence to the realization of the effect projected—most remarkably so in the dream of the new Jerusalem, supposed to be recited by Joad, the priest, which, delivered with due solemnity by Mr. Vandenhoff, to the accompaniment of orchestral music, excited a grave and profound sensation. As the music of *Athaliah* was written expressly with a view to the stage, it cannot but lose something by being transferred to the concert-room. On the other hand, however, in this instance, like the drama of Racine, music is hardly of a nature to excite the enthusiasm of the theatrical audiences of the present day, and it may safely be concluded that if it was not brought forward in the concert-room it would rarely, if ever, be heard. The chorus of the Sacred Harmonic Society, if we are not mistaken, has been more than usually zealous of late in its attempts to acquire perfection. Whether it be the restless indefatigability of Mr. Costa, whose activity is a phenomenon, or a resolution on the part of the amateurs themselves to set competition at defiance, we are unable to pronounce. It matters little, however, what may be the cause, since the result is the same. Of power and correctness of *ensemble* we have rarely heard more signal displays than the choruses, "The Night is departing," and "Ye nations, offer to the Lord," in the *Lobgesang* on Wednesday night. The only error we were able to note was in the *chorale*, "Let all men praise," where the first verse in seven-part harmony (unaccompanied) got considerably flat before the second verse (in unison with full orchestra), "Glory and praise to God," began; the mistake, however, was quickly rectified. The *chorale* and choruses in *Athaliah* went admirably from first to last.

The principal singers were Mrs. Enderssohn, Miss M. Williams, and Mr. Lockey, in the *Lobgesang*, and the same with the addition of Miss Dolby in *Athaliah*. Their task was the more honourable, since, except in the duet "I waited for the Lord" (Mrs. Enderssohn and Miss M. Williams), in the *Lobgesang*, and that in *Athaliah*, "Ever blessed child, rejoice" (by the same ladies), there is nothing in either work which appeals *ad captandum* to the applause of the crowd. The perfect efficiency of these excellent artists, however, was never more remarkably exemplified, and the difficulties of the music were accomplished with an ease which could only proceed from that thoroughly musical education which ranks among the greatest advantages of our English singers, in comparison with those of other countries.

The rule of abstaining from encores and plaudits was adhered to, for the most part, although the hall was completely crowded. The choruses and duets we have specified by name were followed by applause, which, however, was immediately checked; and it was only at the conclusion that a hearty and unrestrained burst for Mr. Costa testified the sense of the audience in reference to the zeal and ability displayed by that gentleman in conducting the performance.—*Times*.

Foreign.

NEW YORK.—The long-expected *debut* of Lola Montes as a *danseuse*, came off on Monday night, at the Broadway Theatre. Expectation was on tiptoe. The building was crowded from the ceiling to the stage. The audience consisted almost entirely of gentlemen. We never saw so few ladies, and so many of the opposite sex present at Broadway. There were not more than thirty females in the house,

but they appeared to be all women of respectability. The general absence of the sex seems strange enough, as they have attended in great numbers the performance of other dancers not superior in moral worth, though not so notorious as the Countess of Lansfeldt. There was one thing, too, rather remarkable about Lola Montes' dancing last night; it was the most modest performance of public dancers we have seen for a length of time. She has a guileless, innocent look, that seems at variance with her reputation. After the performance of a pretty comedy, the curtain remained down for a length of time, when the audience became very impatient and excited, and hissed the orchestra, which was trying to divert them during the interval. At length the ring of the bell announced that the curtain was about to rise, when a burst of applause followed, and a cry of "There!" When the curtain was raised, a very fine tableau of the whole *corps de ballet* presented itself, amidst loud cheers, and many eyes searched round for Lola Montes, but could not find her. In a few minutes she made her appearance on the staircase representing a winding path down a mountain, when she was greeted with tremendous applause. She remained on the spot for some time, curtsying low to the audience, who continued to applaud her for several minutes. She then descended gracefully, and on reaching the stage was received with another burst of applause, which she again acknowledged with a ladylike bow. She was neatly dressed as a Tyrolean; she looked very thin and girlish, far younger than she is—in fact, not more than sixteen years. She has an uncommon face; it is of an aristocratic mould and mien, and there is something fascinating in the expression. But she is not so very beautiful. Her eye is a fine blue, which is set off by beautifully arched brows; but her mouth is by no means pretty. Her chin and neck, however, are fine. Her form is fragile and slender, and her movements and attitudes are very graceful. There is a natural ease in her step which is charming. Her leg is rather common, and her foot certainly neither Andalusian nor diminutive. The coloured engravings in the shop windows are not like her. She is not so *emboupoint* as they represent her. She appeared as Betly in the ballet of the *Tyrolean*, composed expressly for her. Her first dance was the "Tyrolienne," and was well received and warmly applauded in many points. Several bouquets were thrown to her by ladies from the boxes at the conclusion of this dance. The next dance was a "pas de deux," in which Neri, as Daniel, and Lola Montes, danced together. On entering the stage this time, she did not receive any applause, and Neri, at the close, was applauded far more enthusiastically by the audience—doubtless because he was a better dancer. She made a false step in this dance, which brought down a slight hiss from one or two of the audience. The "Mountaineer Dance" of the *corps de ballet*, followed, and after its conclusion there was considerable delay in her returning to the stage, when an idea seemed to prevail that she would not come back. There was some hissing in consequence. At length she appeared in a new costume, which accounted for the delay. She looked well, and was loudly applauded. Her dress consisted of a very pretty Hungarian satin skirt, striped with white and red, with a military black jacket, faced with gold, and a pretty red hat, with a feather. In this dance she was more successful than in the other two. It was a sort of war dance, in which she exhibited the martial bearing and military tread very well. She led a company of soldiers off the stage in a sort of dancing step, and

was enthusiastically applauded. The whole performance lasted forty minutes, and just concluded at nine o'clock. When the curtain fell she was called for with great vehemence, and on coming in front was received with great cheering. She said, in a weak voice, and rather foreign accent, pronouncing the article "the" as "de," "Ladies and Gentlemen,—I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the very kind reception you have given me, a poor stranger, in your noble land." She then retired. Her dances were short and simple, and she performed nothing that could be called a feat. None of these performances were her peculiar Spanish dances, in which she excels. As a *danseuse*, she is decidedly inferior to Cerito, Madame Augusta, and others, but there is a nameless grace of nature about her person and movements, which, with her history, gives her an attraction that a better artist could not command, but which, however, is not destined to be very lasting. On Tuesday evening Lola Montes performed at the Broadway Theatre in the same ballet that she appeared in on Monday evening, the night of her *debut*. Her performance was rather better than on the previous evening, and she was well received and warmly applauded. There appeared to be a general disposition to treat her kindly. There was a large number of ladies in attendance, presenting quite a contrast to Monday evening. We learn, upon good authority, that Mr. Edward Willis is no longer connected with the fortunes of Lola Montes.—*New York Herald*.

Dramatic.

DRURY LANE.—The operatic season commenced on Friday night with *Robert the Devil*. *Fra Diavolo* was announced for Thursday, with Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves, but was postponed till Saturday, in consequence of the illness of the lady. A good deal of curiosity was excited as to how Mr. Bunn would produce Meyerbeer's *chef d'œuvre*, and the names of three untried singers, in the principal parts, lent no weak spur to the excitement. A numerous audience assembled; and there was evidently a feeling, on the part of the visitors, to treat the efforts of the debutantes with every encouragement. Robert was played by M. Fedor, a Russian tenor, who had previously appeared in several Continental theatres with much success. His voice is of good quality, and pleasing rather than powerful; while he displays no small amount of dramatic energy and feeling in his singing. His action is somewhat redundant, though not ungraceful, and his appearance is manly and prepossessing. His performance was loudly cheered throughout, and his success decided.

To Madame Evelina Garcia was assigned the part of Alice; and here again the success of the debutante was unmistakable. Her voice is a high soprano, rather thin, but not devoid of brilliancy, and is exceedingly manageable. She has evidently studied to good purpose, and makes the most of her talents. As an actress, Madame Garcia is intelligent and earnest, and betokens more ease than grace. If we liked her better in the concerted music than in the solos, it was perhaps because she sang with more self-possession when supported by other voices.

Miss Crichton—whose name is Brown, and why change it?—is a pupil of the Royal Academy of Music, and made her first appearance on the stage as Isabella, an arduous and trying part for a novice. She was dreadfully nervous, and could scarcely put one foot before the other. Encouraged,

however, by the reception she obtained, she commenced her first song, and gaining power and courage as she proceeded, quite electrified the house by the beauty and freshness of her voice, and the brilliancy of her singing. Moreover, the young debutante exhibited great feeling and expression, and displayed a dramatic earnestness unprecedented in a beginner. It was a bold stroke of Mr. Bunn's to bring an untried singer before such a critical audience as that of Drury Lane; but her great natural endowments, and her evident dramatic power, fully warranted him in making the trial. Of course Miss Crichton has an immense deal to learn. She is awkward to a degree on the stage, and her action is not under the least control. A few weeks, however, will do much towards remedying these defects; meanwhile, Miss Crichton should study in her closet, and take lessons from some one versed in scenic action and motion. We have no doubt she will prove, by and bye, one of the greatest acquisitions of Mr. Bunn's operatic company.

Mr. Henri Drayton—another first appearance on our stage—has been known some time as a concert singer of reputation. He acquitted himself admirably in *Bertram*. His voice is strong, and of fine quality, and he sings like a musician. He exhibits great dramatic power and skill; so that his performance may be pronounced far above the average merit. Mr. Manvers showed himself up to the business of the scene in *Raimbault*, and sang with effect in the concerted music. His acting was, perhaps, extra-rusticated. In the part of Alberti, a Mr. Dehaga attempted to prove that he was in possession of a bass voice. The evidence was not satisfactory.

The band went well, but might have gone better. Mr. Schira took every possible pains with them, and deserves credit for his zeal and labours in behalf of the opera. Mr. Lovel Phillips, too, did all that was practicable with the chorus; but a few more efficient hands would not have been thrown away. The dresses and appointments were not new, nor was the scenery particularized by brilliancy, or novelty of effect.

At the fall of the curtain, all the principals were recalled with every demonstration of enthusiasm; and subsequently Mr. Bunn had to cross the stage amid a perfect volley of cheers and clappings.

The opera of *Fra Diavolo*, the comic *chef d'œuvre* of Auber, was given with a very strong cast, on Saturday. The event of the evening was the *re-entrée* of Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves, as *Fra Diavolo* and *Zerlina*. These highly popular singers were received with enthusiasm. The *Fra Diavolo* of Mr. Reeves is one of his most striking assumptions. His singing developed all his best qualities. The serenade, "Young Agnes," was deservedly encored, and the great *scena* in Act III, where *Fra Diavolo* recounts his adventures, loudly applauded. This was a graphic and spirited performance. Mrs. Reeves was a charming *Zerlina*—charming because gentle, unobtrusive, and natural. Her singing throughout was that of an accomplished artist. The barcarole, "On yonder rock," was sweetly sung, and the lovely air, "Yes, to-morrow," in the bed-chamber scene, delivered with archness and vivacity. Miss Priscilla Horton is a great acquisition to Mr. Bunn. She is a good musician and an admirable actress. Her *Lady Allcash* was full of spirit and humour. Mr. Whitworth's *Lord Allcash* was quiet, real, and amusing, without being preposterously funny. He was dressed to the life. He sang the music with his accustomed care and correctness. On the whole we have never heard the opera of

Fra Diavolo go so well in London, as far as the principal singers were concerned. The concerted pieces, thanks to such good artists, were irreproachable. The small parts of Matteo, and the two brigands, were judiciously played by Messrs. S. Jones, Dehaga, and Raymond. The band and chorus, under Signor Schira, were active, but might have been more correct and effective in certain points. The opera went off with great animation. The house was good.

On Thursday *Fra Diavolo* was announced, but *Robert* substituted. The following will explain:—

To the Editor of the Times.

Sir,—Will you be so obliging as to give the subjoined certificate that circulation in your journal which it was impossible to obtain for it last evening?—

"I hereby certify that Mr. Sims Reeves is confined to his bed by very severe indisposition, and that it will be highly dangerous to attempt to appear on the stage this evening.

"Jan. 29.

"JOHN ERICHSEN, M.R.C.S."

To my certain knowledge Mr. Sims Reeves made every effort to the last moment to appear, and nothing but the suddenness and severity of the attack prevented his so doing. To avert any further disappointment, I have postponed his re-appearance until Tuesday next,

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your much-obliged servant,

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, Jan. 29.

A. BUNN.

On Wednesday, Miss Helen Faucit (Mrs. Theodore Martin) made her first appearance since her marriage, and played Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. She was welcomed with great warmth. Miss Helen Faucit's Juliet is a performance of the highest merit, and stamps the fair artist as a true Shakespearean actress, and a worthy pupil of Macready. The scene in the garden was exquisitely given, and drew down repeated bursts of applause. Every phase of the character of the heart-stricken Juliet here was rendered with perfect truthfulness and grace. It is hardly necessary to say that in the more passionate scenes Miss Helen Faucit was equally powerful and striking. In short, Miss Helen Faucit proved satisfactorily her claim to the title of the most accomplished actress at present on the English stage. She was loudly applauded throughout, was recalled at the end, and received with the utmost enthusiasm. Mr. Anderson was excellent in *Romeo*. It is decidedly his most effective part since he has appeared at Drury Lane. He was graceful, easy, and earnest; and were it not for an habitual monotony of voice, his performance would have been unexceptionable. Mr. Cooper made a sensible Friar Lawrence, and Mr. Vining essayed Mercutio. Of the rest of the actors it were, perhaps, better to say nothing.

The new ballet, *Vert*—*Vert*, lately produced at the Académie Royale of Paris with great success, is in rehearsal, and will be shortly produced. Mademoiselle Plunkett, the celebrated *danseuse*, and Mademoiselle Carlotta de Vecchi, a new dancer, of whom much is anticipated, are engaged. Mr. Bunn is projecting all his energies into his administration, and is determined that his public shall not sleep for want of novelty.

HAYMARKET.—A new comic opera, entitled *Aminta the Coquette*, the music by Mr. Howard Glover, son of the late renowned actress, was produced on Monday, with well-deserved success. We may at once say, that the manner in which the opera is produced reflects the highest credit on the management. The scenery, costumes, and appointments, are worthy the Lyceum Theatre, which has been brought to such perfection under the unrivalled management of Madame Vestris. The band and chorus, under the judicious training

of Mr. Alfred Mellon, showed themselves efficient in every essential but that of number, a weakness which lies within the means of Mr. Webster, and should be his care to remedy at once. The principal singers, Miss Louisa Pyne, Mrs. Caulfield, Messrs. W. Harrison, Weiss, H. Corri, and Caulfield, exerted themselves to the utmost; and, to conclude, we have rarely witnessed, in all respects, a more praiseworthy performance.

The action of the piece takes place in a Spanish village, near the Pyrenees. Aminta (Miss Louisa Pyne), a rustic coquette, of the same stamp as Adina, in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, is courted by Fernandez (Mr. Harrison), and Don Tenorio Tenebroso (Mr. Weiss), the village Alcalde. She prefers the former, but her love of teasing makes her flirt with the latter, and even when she has promised to indicate her choice by the gift of a rose at a village festival, she so decidedly exhibits a predilection for the alcalde, that Fernandez, fearing to see the rose placed in his rival's hand, rushes from the spot, and joins a band of smugglers. The contraband trade was formerly carried on without risk, and even the Alcalde was in the habit of obtaining smuggled claret across the frontier; but now a troop of soldiers, under the command of Don Alonzo (Mr. Caulfield) has come down, for the express purpose of arresting and hanging every smuggler, direct or indirect, who may fall into its hands. The peril of Fernandez is therefore very great, and Aminta, throwing aside her reserve, endeavours to detach him from the band; however, the interview she has with him leads to no good result. A conflict ensues with the soldiers, who gain the victory, but the smugglers contrive to escape, and, by putting on the cloaks of their friends the villagers, elude observation, and are lost in a general throng. However, the fears of Aminta reveal to Tenorio the secret that Fernandez is among their number, and he insists on the rose as the reward of his silence. Aminta gives the flower to save Fernandez, who witnesses the donation, and, overwhelmed with despair, at once yields himself up to justice. Being confined in Tenorio's house, he is speedily released by Garcias (Mr. H. Corri), a smuggler, who conducts him through a secret panel, often used to gratify the contraband propensities of the Alcalde. In the meanwhile, Aminta has sought the young officer, Don Alonzo, of whom she supplicates the pardon of Fernandez. Alonzo would, at first, make her love the price of his clemency, but meets with a noble resistance; and Fernandez, who overhears the interview, is so moved by the faithfulness and devotion of his mistress, that he is cured of jealousy for ever. Abandoning his first design, Alonzo would now pardon Fernandez without consideration, when Don Tenorio enters, and swears he will report such unjustifiable clemency to the king. At this juncture a number of mysterious hampers arrive—two of which are found to contain bottles of wine, while from a third issues Garcias, with an order for contraband claret, signed by Don Tenorio. The rigid Alcalde, having himself incurred the penalty of the law, is now glad enough to have the whole affair hushed up. Ceasing to oppose his rival's pardon, he is pardoned himself, and the happiness of Fernandez and Aminta is complete.

The music has the requisites for what is essentially comic opera—viz., fluency, lightness, and brilliancy; and, to a degree, we must own, we hardly anticipated from one, who, like Mr. Glover, has aspired almost exclusively to the reputation of a serious writer. There is no overture—at least, none was performed on Monday night. We understand since, that Mr. Howard Glover has written an overture, nevertheless, which

was executed at the second performance of *Aminta*. We have not yet heard it, but shall take an early opportunity of doing so. The opening chorus, "Thy natal moon," is lively and effective. The tenor song of Fernandez, "Queen of my soul," scarcely more than a ballad in form, has an expressive melody, and was so well sung by Mr. Harrison, as to obtain an encore. A song for Garcias, the smuggler, "Over the mountain," is bold. Its successor, "Brightest beauty," for Don Tenorio, is entitled to the same praise. The first was sung by Mr. Corri, and the second by Mr. Weiss, with such spirit as to obtain a more than ordinary applause. The duet which follows, "At once explain," for Fernandez and Don Tenorio, is a clever and effective piece of writing, showing the composer to have well studied the artifices of vocal combination, independently of a great deal of strong dramatic colouring. Aminta's first song, "I do not love," will be remembered as one of the prettiest of the songs of the cantata, *Hero and Leander*, performed with so much effect at the Grand National Concerts at Her Majesty's Theatre, 1850-1. It was sung by Miss Pyne with great archness. An unaccompanied quartet, "This Blushing Rose," is an admirable specimen of vocal part writing, and was remarkably well sung by Miss Louisa Pyne, Mrs. Caulfield, Mr. Harrison, and Mr. Weiss. This was unanimously encored. The finale of the first act may be said to commence with the spirited chorus, "Hail to Aminta." A quartet and chorus, "Do not yet my Heart give way," for the same four, with the addition of Mr. H. Corri, is an able and highly effective piece of dramatic writing, and brings down the fall of the curtain, in the first act, with *eclat*.

The second act is, on the whole, of a lighter character than the first. It includes a stirring solo and chorus, "Gently, Gently," for Mr. Caulfield; a graceful ballad, for Mr. W. Harrison, "Golden Sun;" another lively little chorus about "Spring;" a charming ballad, for Miss Louisa Pyne, "Why, O why;" a short chorus of smugglers; a clever duet, in two movements, for Miss Pyne and Mr. Harrison, "O let not idle jealousy," of which the first is an expressive *andante a due*, and the last a sparkling *vivace*, terminating with some florid triplets for Miss Pyne; a pathetic song, for Miss Pyne, "A wild disorder dwells," distinguished by a skilfully-conducted accompaniment *agitato*, for the orchestra (also from *Hero and Leander*;) a powerfully written *morceau d'ensemble* for all the principals and subordinates, "Soldiers and smugglers towards thy victim," which has the evidence of having been intended for a finale; a delicious buffo song, for Mrs. Caulfield, "What a thing is love," which took the audience by storm; a sweet romanza, for Mr. Harrison, "Oft have I sworn;" a sentimental air, for Miss Pyne, "Star of morning;" a very characteristic *morceau d'ensemble*, for the principals, "A man! a man!" when Garcias the smuggler comes from the hamper; and a brilliant rondo finale, in the bravura style, "My heart with rapture glows," for Miss Pyne, which again brings down the curtain with the best effect.

The majority of these pieces were received by the audience with the utmost favour. Miss Louisa Pyne and Mr. Harrison both exerted themselves to the utmost, and were several times encored, and Mr. Weiss was entitled to the same compliment, and so thoroughly did Mrs. Caulfield enter into the spirit of her buffo song, "What a thing is love," that it was unanimously demanded twice, and was sung through three times with unabated effect. In short, nothing could be more genuinely successful, from first to

last, than the opera of *Aminta the Coquette*, which we record with the more pleasure, as it was entirely deserved. The principal performers were recalled at the end, and these had to make way for Mr. Howard Glover, who was unanimously summoned, and enthusiastically cheered. The opera was announced for repetition, three times a week, by Mr. Leigh Murray, under whose able direction it was first put upon the stage, and the announcement was received with great applause.

SURREY.—The comedy of *The Honeymoon* has been played here to crowded houses, since our last notice. This play, which is confessedly founded on Shakspeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, is known to have been written in admiration of our old dramatists, and it is further remarkable, that it is the only one of the author's four plays that has stood the test of time. In spite of some weak scenes, it is unquestionably one of the best acting comedies in the language, and can never fail to please a mixed audience. The play, ever since its production, half a century ago, has, in fact, been in constant requisition in every national theatre in England. The comedy has been, in the present instance, carefully cast. Mr. Creswick's portrait of the duke, was graphic and polished. Mr. Shepherd delivered the more broad and boisterous humour of Rolando with his usual pungency. Miss Aitken was the Juliana, and Miss Doria the Volante; although young votaries of the dramatic muse, they are both of them of fair promise. Miss Aitken's performance, allowing for a few provincialisms, displayed several clever points; and Miss Doria, who is very handsome, exhibited an archness and humour, which, by the aid of time, will give her a prominent place in her profession. The pantomime, which has as yet lost nothing of its attraction, seems likely to outrun all its competitors in popular favour.

Reviews of Music.

SOFTLY, YE NIGHT WINDS—Ballad—Written by Mary E. Hewitt—Composed by W. Vincent Wallace. Cramer, Beale and Co.

All we can say of this ballad is, that the melody flows, and the whole is unpretending. It contains no point that demands especial notice. The words are commonplace and singable.

ORPHAN HOURS, THE YEAR IS DEAD—Song—Poetry by Percy Bysshe Shelley—Music by Minima. Rousselot and Co.

We regret to pronounce that the music of this song does not sufficiently bear the stamp of inspiration to entitle it to alliance with one of the most exquisite lyrics of perhaps the greatest of lyric poets. It is laboured, instead of being simple, and the labour by no means deepens the expression. Moreover, the accentuation on the passage, "See, it smiles as it is sleeping"—thus rendered, "See, it smiles as it is sleeping," and the next line, "Mocking your un-timely weeping"—is bad, and the same mistake is committed in the next verse, which we will not cite. Moreover, again, the phrase of the *refrain* is common. Nevertheless the song bears evidences of being the production of a musician. It is one thing, however, to set to music the lyrics of ordinary song writers, and another, by means of the same art, to illustrate the glowing eloquence of a mighty poet.

SPRING IS RETURNING—Words by Moritz Albert—Music by Gustav Holzel. Rousselot and Co.

A tolerably good specimen of the German lied, although the melody is by no means distinguished for novelty: and the composer, in its application to harmony, gives himself wide license to the use of passing notes, which he may probably defend upon his theory of his own, wherewith we are not, nor do we desire, to become acquainted.

FADING AWAY—Song—Written and Composed by Anna Fricker. Charles Ollivier.

This ballad has at least one good quality, the melody is simple, unaffected, and clear, with which may be closed the index of its merits. The accompaniment is neat, but unpretending to a fault.

BRILLIANT VARIATIONS ON A FAVOURITE BOHEMIAN MELODY—W. V. Wallace. Cramer, Beale and Co.

While we have such skilful and elegant writers of variations *elegante et facile*, equally adapted for the school-room or drawing-room, as Messrs. Vincent Wallace, Brinley Richards, and George Osborne, equal in many instances to the most successful productions of Henri Herz, whose style they successfully and courageously emulate, what do we want with such composers as Rosellen and Gloria, who, though graceful and pleasing in their way, should not be exclusively patronised, to the detriment of natives at least their equal?

The variations of Mr. Wallace, on the Bohemian Melody, may be commended as possessing all the elements constituting excellence in the class of music to which they belong. They are light, brilliant, facile, and well-contrasted. They lie well for the hand, and afford at once a useful and pleasing exercise to the learner. They are, moreover, written with the taste and discretion of a musician. Though fashioned on existing types, the major part of the variations are sufficiently new to be interesting, and the moderate length of the piece is a still further recommendation. In short, among the lighter and more ephemeral productions of Mr. Wallace, we scarcely know one more attractive than the "Brilliant Variations" before us, and we prophecy for it a large sale.

Original Correspondence.

CLASSICAL PIANISTS.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—What was the old gentleman (who writes in the *Athenæum*) dreaming about when he wrote thus last week? Speaking of a new pianist, he says, "Perhaps the early arrival of this gentleman may denote his intention of permanently taking up (sic.) his residence in London; since there is now ample room here for a first-class player of classical music." And are all our "first-class" players, then, dead, or gone to the "diggings" in Australia? Or has he forgotten the existence of Sterndale Bennett, Charles Hallé, Miss Kate Loder, Lindsay Sloper, Brinley Richards, &c. &c. &c.? Pray, give him a "refresher," or the worthy old gentleman will be misleading us, without, possibly, being conscious of it.

Yours respectfully,

A SUBSCRIBER.

MR. ROBINSON.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

Belfast, 22nd Jan., 1852.

SIR,—In your correspondent's criticism of the singing of Mr. Robinson in the *Creation*, as published in your paper of the 10th inst., I perceive a glaring inconsistency. He says, in the first place, "that his (Mr. R.'s) voice is too like a tenor in the upper register, and that the lower is hard, and nasal, and wants the breadth and tone of the basso profundo." This is all very well; but further on, he says that Mr. Robinson was evidently suffering under an attack of sore-throat. Now how can any person attempt to criticise any singer when he labours under the latter disadvantage?

Excuse my occupying your valuable time.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

A SUBSCRIBER.

MADRIGAL AND GLEE UNION.—The second concert took place on Monday, and was more successful than the first. We have not time to enter into details, but we can only say the room was crowded, and the performances constituted a chain of triumphs.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL.

The nineteenth annual General Meeting of the members of this now national institution, was held at Exeter Hall, on Tuesday evening, the president, J. N. Harrison, Esq., in the chair.

A lengthened report of the operations of the past year was presented to the meeting, and unanimously adopted and ordered to be printed.

The following are a few of the points of interest alluded to in it. The gross receipts of the year, including balance in hand at Christmas, 1850, of £200 9s 6d, has amounted to £10,357 2s 4d; the expenses to £8982 8s 11d: £1227 19s laid out in the purchase of £500 additional consols, and £750 in the 3½ per cents. Including balance in the Treasurer's hands of £196 14s 5d., the entire property of the Society amounts to nearly £4000, being an amount in excess of last year by nearly £1500, which may therefore be stated as the profit on the year.

The amount expended in the purchase of orchestral music had been £131 3s 5d, making, with the three previous years, a total outlay, under this head, of £664 16s 5d. The net profits on the sale of the books of words, for the four years had been £587 17s. Taking into account the unsold stock of books, on hand, it would be found, that the profits resulting from the sale of books of words to the audiences, at six-pence each, had very nearly sufficed to purchase the entire stock of orchestral music required for the Society's use since 1847.

As showing how much has been gained by the adoption of the system of purchasing, in place of hiring music, as formerly, it may be remarked that for the eighty-one concerts which have taken place since 1847, and including the rehearsals, it would have cost the Society, for the loan of a much less number of copies than it now possesses, upwards of £2400.

The Report further stated, that the present gratifying position of the Society had been the result of strict adherence to the principles put forward on its establishment, and opportunity was offered, by the introduction of a portion of the original prospectus, issued at the establishment of the Society in 1832, to congratulate the writer, Mr. Brewer, the Honorary Secretary, and other founders of the Society still connected with it, upon the success of their labours.

The following appeared in reference to the library:—"The accessions during the past year to the library of reference, which may now fairly be described as one of the most extensive and valuable of its kind in London, have been mainly confined to donations."

"To one gentleman, in particular, the Rev. Francis John Stainforth, the Society is greatly indebted for a most valuable addition. Unconnected as the rev. gentleman has been with the Society, otherwise than as a frequent visitor to the concerts, and except also by a similar act of kindness on a former occasion, the Committee cannot but feel particularly honoured by this mark of appreciation of the Society's efforts and usefulness, and in tendering to him their warmest acknowledgments for his liberality, they feel assured of having the cordial concurrence of every member of the Society. Grateful acknowledgments are also due to Mr. James Taylor, an old and much-respected member, who has added to his former gifts a further donation of an interesting and valuable collection of musical compositions."

After the proceedings connected with the report had terminated, the election of the new members of the Committee was proceeded with. Seven candidates were proposed, but the four retiring members, Mr. Husk, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Whitehorn, and Mr. Thomas Mitchell, were re-elected by large majorities.

On the motion of Mr. Brewer, a Special Committee was appointed, consisting of six of the Committee, and six of the general body of Members, to take into consideration the Rules and Regulations of the Society, with a view of suggesting to a future General Meeting what alterations and amendments may be considered necessary. Complimentary votes were passed to the Officers,—to the Committee,—to Mr. Costa, whose continued active services in behalf of the Society were warmly acknowledged,—to the Rev. Mr. Stainforth, for his valuable donation to the Library, &c., &c., and the Meeting dissolved.

It was announced that the performance to follow that of

Mendelssohn's *Lodgesang*, and *Athalie*, on Wednesday evening, would be the *Elijah*, on Friday next, the 6th of February, for which Mr. Sims Reeves, has been engaged.

Provincial.

MANCHESTER.—An instrumental concert took place at the Concert Hall, on Wednesday evening, the 21st. The chief features of the programme were Mendelssohn's symphony in A major, Beethoven's Septuor, and Mozart's overture to *Don Giovanni*. Of these, the Septuor formed the nucleus of attraction. It was divided into two portions, one being performed in each act (a somewhat novel arrangement), and admirably played. The whole band indeed went through its duty with irreproachable precision throughout the evening. The vocal part of the concert fell entirely on the shoulders of Miss Mes-sent. The fair and intelligent artiste was encoined in Walter Maynard's graceful song, "Kathleen is gone," and in Curschman's "Maiden gay." She also sung Sir H. Bishop's popular song, "Tell me my heart," and Mozart's "Per Pieta," with great and well merited applause. The attendance was good, and the music was listened to throughout with great attention. Mr. Charles Hallé was the conductor, and Mr. Seymour the leader.

SHEFFIELD.—Mr. Flint's benefit concert took place on Tuesday evening last, at the Music Hall, when, we are sorry to say, in spite of the great efforts made to get off tickets, that the saloon was only about half full, and the gallery three parts. At this lack of attendance we were astonished, as Mr. Flint has long been known in the town as an enthusiastic amateur of music; and as we are certain great efforts were made to give him a real benefit. The vocalists were Mrs. Parkes, Miss Seale, Miss Burdekin; Mr. Walker, Mr. Inkersall, Mr. J. Gilbert, and Mr. Joseph Flint. Also the members of the Apollo Society, and the band of the Philharmonic. This was enough surely, had the talent been considered equal to the quantity. The concert commenced with the overture to *Zampa*. The band also played Karl Buller's (alias Jullien's) *Mandoline Waltz*, and played it very well, the cornet doing full justice to his beautiful part. In the programme it said *Waltz Bosio*, and we heard one critic saying to a lady, "Is it not a delightful waltz? How superior is *Bosio* to Jullien!!" This was followed by the glee "The breath of the brier," sung in imitation of the "London Madrigal Society," but not quite so well. Indeed, we may say of all the glees and madrigals during the evening, that they displayed much noise and determined energy, but lacked discriminating taste and judgment. Mr. Gilbert did himself justice in the song, "These as they change," by Calcott; but the audience did not seem to appreciate the difference of opinion that existed between the singer and the band. We were amused with its novelty, especially as all came in together for the last note. The *trio*, by *Mayseder*, was nicely played, especially by the violoncello; the violin wanted animation and feeling, and the piano, though played neatly and the passages correctly executed, was yet so weak and powerless as to be ineffective. Miss Seale and Mrs. Forbes acquitted themselves well, and deserved the applause they received, as also did Miss Burdekin, who, however, requires good tuition. Mr. Walker had little to do; we think he is improving. Mr. Flint, in the "Bay of Biscay," really did well; better than we have ever heard him: but the "Bay of Biscay" is a tenor song, not a bass. Mr. Inkersall sang his song too loud, and should never attempt running passages, as he has not the least flexibility. The concert was very late, so we did not stay to the end.

PLYMOUTH.—(From a Correspondent).—The Theatre during the last week has been brilliantly attended. On Tuesday, Mr. Wheeler, an amateur of pretensions, undertook the part of Mr. Affable Hawk, in *The Game of Speculation*, a part Charles Matthews has been lately acting with so much success at the Lyceum. He played throughout with great care, tact, and judgment, and was loudly applauded. The dress boxes were crowded, and his friends and himself must have been gratified with the favorable reception he

met with. On Monday *Pauline*, with all its "effects," was produced. Our popular manager, Mr. Newcombe, taking Charles Kean's part, which, albeit unused to tragedy, he played with a force and energy which carried the piece (always a little heavy) through most successfully. Mrs. Boyce, who played Mrs. Kean's part, acted with a touching pathos, and was greatly applauded. On Friday, Mr. Newcombe, ever first on the score of charity, gave the receipts of the house, which must have been very considerable, to the sufferers of the Amazon. Mr. Paumier has just taken his benefit. The pieces were the *Lady of Lyons*, *A Lover by Proxy*, and *English Etiquette*. Mr. Paumier's connection with the military caused the dress boxes to have a gay and animated appearance from the number of red coats, and many were turned away from the pit. This gentleman's talents and accomplishments render him an acquisition to any first-rate circuit, the manager of which may be fortunate enough to secure his services. Jullien plays on Monday. Not a place is to be had in the boxes, for love or money. All the pit is to be converted into stalls. The theatre will be fitted up precisely in the same manner as at Drury Lane, and from its size will have an imposing effect. Jullien's name is a tower of strength in Plymouth, every body here is desirous to hear his new prima donna, the charming Cicely Nott. The second Concert of the PHILHARMONIC Society took place on Wednesday evening, the 21st, and, if possible, the room was more crowded than on the occasion of the last performance. Besides the professionals who were so successful on the last occasion, we had an addition of three amateurs, in Mrs. Trelawney, Lord Graves, and Dr. F. Yonge; Mrs. Trelawney's voice is a contralto of much power, which she uses with tact seldom known among amateurs. Dr. F. Yonge is a tenor, and has evidently studied with care and under able tuition. Lord Graves is a *basso profundo*; he was labouring under a severe cold, but in spite of this he proved himself a capable and painstaking singer. Miss Vaughan was in good voice and sung with much sweetness. This lady improves on acquaintance, and will no doubt prove a valuable acquisition to these musical meetings. Mrs. Henry Reed, without whom there would be a sad void in any concert given at Plymouth, was most enthusiastically cheered on her appearance on the platform; and although having a wretched instrument to play on—the directors of these concerts should attend to this—performed with a science and execution which delighted all present. The piece was Rossini's "Souvenir d'I Capuleti," and she blended the sentimental with the brilliant in a scientific manner, which made her the "star" of the night. Mr. Reed, as conductor of the orchestra, was equally successful. The chorusses were excellent, and Mr. Smith, in the absence of Mr. Constantine, deserves the greatest credit for the precision with which he kept them together.

STOCKWELL.—A concert was given at the School Room here on Thursday se'nnight, for the benefit of Mr. F. Kingsbury, a pianist of reputation. The engagements were Miss Dolby, Miss Messent, Miss Rycroft, and Mr. Lawler, Mr. H. Blagrove (violin), and Mr. Lucas (violinello). The programme contained an unusual number of glees and madrigals. Among these were Purcell's madrigal, "In these delightful pleasant groves," and the well-known one of Festa, "Down in a flowery vale." Miss Dolby was the main vocal attraction. This lady, who is a social grace, and loves to veil the artist in the woman, sang Rossi's aria, with the pretty words, "Ah! rendimi quel core," and delivered it with the homely and impassioned simplicity which she never fails to impart to these humbler productions of the muse. She also sang Linley's ballad, "Ida," and Donizetti's "Brindisi," in which last she was encored. Miss Rycroft, who sings very nicely, obtained a like honor in Mr. Balfe's solo (with chorus), "My task is ended." Mr. C. Glover's lively ballad, "Gypsy Jane," and Mr. Baker's "I've a Heart to Exchange," met with an appropriate and graphic interpreter in the pretty Miss Messent, who was encored in both songs. Mr. Lawler gave "Largo al Factotum," with abundance of energy in the musical portion of it, and a *quantum sufficit* of rattling vivacity in the dramatic part. The instrumental portion of the concert consisted of a solo by Mr. H. Blagrove, Beethoven's pianoforte trio (No. 4, op. 11), by Messrs. F. Kingsbury, Blagrove, and Lucas, and a solo on the violinello by Mr. Lucas, all of which were duly appreciated.

Miscellaneous.

WINTER MUSICAL EVENINGS.—Neither more nor less than a winter MUSICAL UNION—a boon to amateurs and professors. Bravo! Mr. Ella. We trust you may win: you deserve it. Thursday night was the inauguration, Willis's Rooms the locale. The audience was numerous and brilliant: The programme was varied and excellent: it consisted of Haydn's quartett in D minor, No. 78; the *andante* and *scherzo* in E and A minor, from an unfinished quartet of Mendelssohn, op. 81; Spohr's solo quartet in E, op. 43; Beethoven's sonata for piano and violinello in F, cp. 5; Hummel's brilliant trio in E, op. 83; and "La Chasse," a capriccio by Herr Pauer. The executants were M. Sainton (violin 1), Herr Schmidt (violin 11), Mr. Hill (viola), and Sig. Piatti (violinello). Of these excellent players it is enough to say that they displayed their accustomed talent in the performance of the music allotted to them. Herr Pauer, the pianist, is a master. He has all the requisites of a fine performer, and his style is as good as his execution is correct. He completely won the sympathies of the audience, both in the sonata of Beethoven (in which Piatti was perfect), and the "flashy" trio of Hummel. He played upon an instrument which, for beauty of tone and clearness, we have not known surpassed. Had such an instrument been exhibited in the Crystal Palace, M. Berlioz himself (not to mention Mr. Thalberg) would have awarded it the first medal in council, and incontinent. Sainton was in fine play, and in Spohr's difficult passages outdid himself. Hill came out strong and healthy as usual in the "pet" viola *obligato* in Mendelssohn's tuneful *andante*. Herr Schmidt is a capital second violin. Nothing could pass off more pleasantly than the whole performance. Mr. Ella may count upon success.

PRESENT TO MADAME WAGNER, FROM MR. LUMLEY.—The Leipzig *Musical Gazette* contains a detailed description of a splendid 'Porte-monnaie' which Mr. Lumley is said to have presented to Fraulein Johanna Wagner. This porte-monnaie is of gold, one of its sides is ornamented with a branch of forget-me-nots in diamonds, and the other side contains a Lilliputian watch of the comfortable size of a sixpenny-piece.

BASS SINGING AND BASER WRITING.—We give the following literally as we have received it, (says a contemporary at Leeds,) names only omitted:—"On the 15th, at —, was interred the remains of Mr. — aged 74. He was hiley respected has a Base singer in sacred music he was undeniable. In his Plaintiff songs I never heard one that could surpass him as regards his voice he was possest with one of the finest voices that ever was heard it was sweet and melow to the ear his expression was exelent his notes was firm and his words plain. In private company, he was possest with some of the finest hairs that could be produced and in performing them he was the master of all that ever I heard.— I have the honour to be yours respectfully lover of harmony —,"—*Leeds Paper*.

MR. JOSEPH STAMMERS, the enterprising and indefatigable director of the Wednesday Concerts, has announced his benefit for the 11th of February, on which occasion he has engaged a large cohort of vocalists and instrumentalists, including most of the notorieties at present in London. Mr. Stammers, we understand, intends resuming his annual series of Wednesday Concerts, commencing on the 3rd of March, and to be continued every fortnight.

THE MELODISTS' CLUB commenced their meetings for the season on Thursday 29th inst., at the Freemason's Tavern; B. B. Cabbell Esq., M. P. in the chair. There was a large attendance of members for a first night, and the evening's amusement of music, both vocal and instrumental, afforded the greatest pleasure. Mr. Gibson delighted the company with some admirable pianoforte performances; and amongst the vocalists were Mr. Donald King, Mr. Land, (who also accompanied in his usual effective manner), Mr. Leffer, Mr. Bradbury, Mr. Gear, Mr. Lawler and others.

G. HERBERT RODWELL.—The mortal remains of the late G. Herbert Rodwell, the celebrated composer and dramatic author, were deposited in the Brompton Cemetery, on Wednesday, 28th inst., followed by Mr. Chapman, Mr. Land, Mr. Littlewood and other friends of the deceased. Sir H. Bishop was prevented attending, in consequence of sudden indisposition.

LONDON THURSDAY CONCERTS.—The fifth and last of the series took place on Thursday. The singers were Miss Dolby, Miss Pyne, Miss Messent, Miss Ransford, Miss Alleyne, Mr. Swift, and Mr. Frank Bodda. Miss Arabella Goddard was the instrumentalist. Of the singers, Miss Alleyne was by far the most successful. Her "Bid me discourse," was encored in a perfect storm of applause, and was repeated with equal effect. Of this young lady, who has appeared at intervals before the public, and with various success, we learn, that she was a pupil of T. Cooke, and first appeared, when very young, in 1845, at the St. James's Theatre at a concert. Lately she has been taking lessons from Mr. Emanuel Garcia, and has appeared in public but seldom. Her voice is a clear and brilliant soprano, flexible, and deliciously in tune. Her enunciation is distinct, every word being heard, and her expression and feeling unmistakable. We never, in fact, heard Bishop's charming song so charmingly and delightfully rendered. Miss Alleyne was so overpowered by the tremendous reception she obtained, that she shed tears after the repeat, when she reached the retiring room. We must own that Miss Alleyne produced such an effect on ourselves, that we shall put off any further observations on her singing till we have heard her again, and are enabled to criticise her calmly. Miss Arabella Goddard created her old enthusiasm in both her pieces, and was rapturously encored in both. The first was Thalberg's "Masaniello" fantasia, which she followed up with the same composer's "Don Pasquale" serenade. The second was Weber's "Invitation to the Waltz," which, being encored, was repeated. Miss Arabella Goddard has proved the "Star of Arcady" of the Thursday Concerts. Encores were also awarded to Miss Dolby, Miss Messent, Mr. Swift, and Mr. Frank Bodda and the choir, in Handel's "Haste thee, Nymph."

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—Mr. Hullah began his second Weekly Concerts of ancient and modern music, sacred and secular, on Wednesday evening week, at the above locale. The attendance was not numerous. Mr. Hullah was well received. The programme consisted of Mendelssohn's version of the 95th Psalm; a new and very clever song, "By the rivers of Babylon," by Mr. Waley, sung by Miss Alleyne; Mr. Henry Leslie's Festival Anthem, which produced so great an effect last year; and Handel's *Alexander's Feast*. The band, led by Mr. Blagrove, exhibits the same merits and deficiencies as last year. The chorus, consisting of the members of Mr. Hullah's Upper Singing School, leave yet much room for improvement in the article of intonation. The performances on the whole were more imposing than perfect. In the air, "Softly sweet," Mr. Lucas played a lengthy cadenza on the violoncello, which was longly and loudly applauded by the members of the orchestra. Sig. Piatti has been engaged as principal violoncello at the Sacred Harmonic Society. The concert was too long, although the programme was decidedly interesting. There are only to be four concerts this year, and no original compositions are advertised. *The Times*, however, assures its readers that a new cantata was prepared expressly for Mr. Hullah, by an eminent English composer, which, owing to some unexplained *contretemps*, was not produced. We are unable to enter into this matter, knowing nothing of the particulars. The principal singers on Monday were Misses Birch and Alleyne, Messrs. Swift and Bodda. Miss Birch sang finely; and with less exaggeration, Mr. Swift would have been excellent.

THE BIRMINGHAM TRIENNIAL MUSICAL FESTIVAL, which, for more than half-a-century, has maintained a leading reputation in the musical world, takes place, this year, under the patronage of the Queen and Prince Albert, and under the Presidency of the Right Honourable Lord Leigh; the days appointed for its celebration being the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th of September next. We hear that the musical arrangements are in a forward state; and we doubt not but that, under the skilful "baton" of Mr. Costa, who, as on the last occasion, will preside as conductor, a great treat is in store for the lovers of that high class of music which can only be rendered in perfection at these ré-unions.

M. JULLIEN, to maintain the high character of his grand Yorkshire Voucher Ball, called in the assistance of that clever decorative artist, Mr. Jackson, of Hampstead-street, Fitzroy-square, who introduced an original design and splendid decoration, which may be entitled "The Fairy Baronial," something we have read of in

our early fairy tales, that gave us so many pleasant dreams by night, and charmed our after-school-hour leisure. The heraldic student would be much puzzled to find out a just nomenclature to these designs; he, therefore, must consider that they belong to the fairies, and are not to be found elsewhere. There are forty-four pillars in this noble room; and the decoration of each appeared to be perfect of itself, consisting of banners, varied in gold and silver tissue, and different coloured satins, embellished with the Royal Arms, stars, and other devices. The edges were enriched with magnificent gold lace, of an expensive character; and added to each banner were two blue tarlatan drapery flags, edged with gold lace, and mounted on blue staves with gilt spears, and united with a profusion of gold boughs, to attach the banners and flags to the staves. To complete the whole, on each set of pillar ornaments there was a shield, of nice proportions, covered with scarlet velvet, the edges embroidered with broad gold lace to match the banner above, the centre of the shield being ornamented with a wreath of gold, of elegant design. The whole *ensemble* of these columns, when viewed from the lower end of the room, produced an exhibition of the most beautiful and costly design of ball-room decorations ever introduced. The orchestra was ornamented with four elegant statues, behind each a trophy of blue tarlatan flags, surmounted with gilt spear heads, and gold boughs to correspond. Below these figures was placed a white silk drapery, enriched with gold lace; this drapery was also ornamented with large gold wreaths of the same design as was on the shields. The votaries to Terpsichore would perceive, in these decorations, the taste and liberality of Mons. and Madame Jullien, which, coupled with the expenses of his strong band, must have amounted to a far greater sum than the receipts arising from these performances. —*Yorkshire Gazette*.

SUBSCRIPTION CONCERT.—The first of a series of Subscription Concerts, was given at the Bridge House Hotel, London Bridge, on Wednesday, the 21st ultimo. The vocalists were Miss Eliza Birch, Miss Dolby, Mr. Young, Mr. E. Gray, and Mr. Löffler; Mr. Richardson, with his "flauto magico," forming the instrumental relief. The encores were Miss Dolby, in "Il Segreto;" Mr. Young, in one of his ballads; and Mr. Richardson, in both of his solos. Miss Eliza Birch gave an expressive rendering of a nice ballad by Baker, "Oh, how can I smile?" Mr. G. H. Lake conducted.

MR. AGUILAR'S CONCERTS.—Mr. Aguilar, one of our ablest composers and pianists, has re-commenced his performances of classical pianoforte music, which were so deservedly successful last year, at the New Beethoven Rooms. The programme last night was confined entirely, as far as the instrumental music was concerned, to the works of Beethoven, and included the celebrated *Sonata Pathétique*; the sonata in G (No. 1, Op. 29), and two of the "Bagatelles"—besides the second sonata from Op. 12, for pianoforte and violin, with Herr Jausa. Mr. Aguilar's pianoforte playing belongs to the best school, and he entered into the spirit of Beethoven's music like one thoroughly versed in the style of the author. Mechanical proficiency on one hand, and legitimate taste on the other, are often found separately; but Mr. Aguilar combines both, and consequently possesses the means of giving effect to music which not merely demands the exercise of manual dexterity, but the higher qualities of feeling and expression. In the duet, he was most admirably seconded by Herr Jausa, a violinist who can boast the distinction of having been the leader of the quartet party at Vienna, which was famous during so long a period for the exclusive performance of Beethoven's posthumous quartets. The duets and the solos of Mr. Aguilar were applauded with the utmost warmth by a crowded and fashionable audience, fully capable of appreciating his exertions. The programme was varied by two vocal *morceaux* of Rossini and Curschmann, sung with much taste by Miss Messent, who, nevertheless, would have done better, had she selected some specimens from the songs of Beethoven, whose compositions form the basis of Mr. Aguilar's scheme. —*Times*.

CROSBY HALL.—The second concert of the series of six, took place on Wednesday last, before a crowded audience. The programme included the names of Mrs. Newton, Miss Cundell, Miss Messent, and Madlle. Theresa Wagner; Messrs. Swift, and Frank

Bodda, as vocalists; M.M. Sainton, Cave, and A. Billet, as instrumentalists. Mons. Billet played the fine sonata in C minor (Op. 35) of Dussek; the sonata of Beethoven, for pianoforte and violin, also in C minor, with Mons. Sainton; and three *Lieder ohne Worte* of Mendelssohn. In the second part Mons. Sainton played a solo which was greatly applauded. M. Billet played also a norturno, called "Le soir," and a study, "La Sylphide," from his own composition. Mr. Cave also played a solo on the concertina, which pleased much. Mr. Swift was encored in his first song of Mendelssohn. Mr. Bodda was encored in his first song. Miss Messent also, and Mrs. Newton also. They all sang twice.

FERDINAND PRAEGER.—We have before us a whole bundle of German Journals, which report the successful "tournee," of this musician. Hamburg, Lubeck, Berlin, Frankfort, Mayence, Darmstadt, and Leipzig, &c., have eulogized his compositions, as originally striking and his playing as remarkable both for feeling and execution. At Leipzig, Praeger performed at the celebrated *Gewandhaus* Concerts, an *Alegro de Concert*, and two *Morceaux de Salon*, the first of which gave him the praise of the musicians, for its severity and chastity of style if we may say so, and the two other *morceaux* gained the admiration of the fair *dilettanti* Pianists, for their grace and elegance.

ALDERSGATE-STREET.—The concerts given by the Music Class of the Literary and Scientific Institution are advancing in favour among the city community, and from the assemblies that congregated at these fortnightly concerts prove that patronage is in the ascendant, and that no spirit on the part of the directors is wanting to render these "*Soirées Musicales*" worthy of favour. On Friday, the first of the second series of the season was not so well attended as we could have wished, owing to the inclemency of the weather. Misses Clari Fraser, Henderson, Law, and Stuart; Messrs. Tedder, Day, and Leffler, assisted. Mr. Leffler (by desire) introduced "Non piu andrai," and was exceedingly happy in the ballad of the "Rover's Life." Mr. G. Tedder essayed the popular *scena* from the *Sonnambula*, "All is lost now." We should advise him for the present to confine himself to ballads, in which he has gained success, as he has not studied sufficiently yet to give effect to Italian operatic music. With reference to the lady vocalists, we must mention favourably the Scotch ballad, "Jock o' Hazeldean," sang with the true Scotch accent, by Miss Lizzy Stuart, and encored; she substituted "Bonnie Dundee." In the second part of the concert, Miss Clari Fraser met with a flattering reception in "Should he upbraid," and "Courtin's very charming," both of which were encored. Mr. Cornish, as usual, was very efficient in his accompaniments on the pianoforte.

Poetry.

A SONG FROM VICTOR HUGO.

Though birds of the rarest
The woods may rejoice,
The sweetest and fairest,
'Tis, sings in thy voice,
Though Heav'n may the night star
Unveil in the skies,
'Twere dim by the bright star
That burns in thine eyes.
Though Spring to the bower
May roses impart,
The tenderest flower
Has root in thy heart.
This bird of the bower—
This star from above—
This soul rooted flower—
What is it?—'Tis love!

ROBERT B. BROUGH.

N.B. The above words are copyright.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.—R. A., Manchester; D. G., Devizes; J. T. T., Ryde; C. H., Manchester; F. V., Reading; F. W. Nottingham; E. G. M., Abingdon; G. F. C., Sheffield.

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Some degree of novelty must be one of the materials in every instrument which works upon the mind, and curiosity blends itself more or less with all our passions. The first and the simplest emotion, says Burke, which we discover in the human mind, is curiosity. Now while, on the one hand, by the performance of new works a laudable curiosity is gratified, on the other hand, encouragement is given to unknown and aspiring talent, while a better appreciation of the excellence of former works is imparted to the public. Modern works may not approach the perfection of those of a former period; yet they will bear a peculiarity of style, an impress of manner, will be tinged with a complexion of the present age, and may thus convey a charm that earlier works, however superior, cannot possess.

The New Philharmonic Society does not entertain the opinion acted upon by an older institution, that no schools but those which may be called classical are to be considered as capable of affording pleasure, and that the works of such schools only can be enjoyed by a select few Amateurs and Artists. On the contrary, it is believed that all schools have their particular excellencies, and that the feeling and sympathy of the public will be awakened, and vibrate simultaneously with the faintest touch of that which is highest and most beautiful in art.

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The Orchestra will be on a large and magnificent scale, embracing the most eminent talent in Europe.

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As the Directors are desirous that these performances should be open to all lovers of art, the prices of admission will be fixed at the lowest rate, compatible with a just estimate of receipt and expenditure; the calculation is formed on the largest audience the Hall will accommodate.

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MR. SCIPION ROUSSELOT has the honour to announce that its SIX PERFORMANCES will be resumed on the alternate Wednesdays from March the 24th, and that in order to prevent the confusion which occurred from the crowded state of the rooms at the last concert of last season, the Subscribers will have reserved places. Parties wishing to have the front seats are requested to make early application. Admission, transferable, Two Guineas; Professional Subscription, not transferable, One Guinea. To be had of Messrs. Rousselot and Co., 66, Conduit-street, Regent-street.

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